

March 1, 1961.

Mr. R. P. Levine,
Division of Botany, U. Cal.,
Los Angeles 24, Calif.

Dear Paul:

Thank you for your prompt reply.

I think that it would be best to wait to hear from the fellowship award committees before doing anything else. I also concur in not communicating again with NRC, unless your fellowship is awarded, in which case it will then be your task to rectify the situation, which should not be difficult. With respect to PHS, I am not certain whether it would be better tactics to amend your application now or not. The PHS does put an undue weight on the field of investigation as against the academic qualifications of the investigator, and it is conceivable that a problem in bacteriology might appear in a more attractive light. This would depend a great deal on the orientation of your original application. I have written a letter to Stone, here enclosed, which you can forward if you decide this to be the better course.

One point is still not entirely clear, your standing re Buzzatti. Have you definitely decided to put off a trip to Italy, or will you try it if financial support comes through? I don't mind at all being put off about this as far as facilities for you here are concerned, but before any steps are taken to create a salary, we would need some assurance that you would be available. The figure you mentioned seems quite reasonable, and I am fairly sure that if there is any support at all, it would be at that figure or higher. In comparing stipends, however, you will have to keep in mind the very stiff US income tax. Its applicability to post-doctoral fellowships is being disputed now between Treasury and PHS, and presumably with other foundations also. Any stipend not in the form of a direct fellowship to you would certainly be taxable. I am afraid that your wife's assistantship would be also.

Housing has improved considerably in Madison, and there is a bureau of the same calibre as Berkeley's. There is nothing in particular to do about it for the present.

You might be interested to start going into the microbial genetic literature (to the extent you haven't already). It's somewhat dated, but you might have some use for the reading list I used in the course at Berkeley last summer.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg.